

RECOGNIZING MR. CALVIN DICKERSON FOR HIS CONTRIBUTIONS AND SERVICE THROUGHOUT HIS COMMUNITY

**HON. BENNIE G. THOMPSON**

OF MISSISSIPPI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, January 17, 2012*

Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor a remarkable and honorable man, Mr. Calvin Dickerson. Mr. Dickerson has shown what can be done through hard work, dedication, and a desire to serve. He is currently a 56-year-old resident of Rolling Fork, Mississippi, where he volunteers countless hours to the Mississippi Christian Family Services.

Mr. Dickerson is well known at Mississippi Christian Family Services and throughout the community for his hard work, dedication, reliability, and kind deeds. His work at Mississippi Christian Family Services includes making sure families in need of quality social services are provided for in a kindly, comforting, and proficient manner.

Mr. Dickerson volunteers with the Rolling Fork Fire Department, Police Department, and assists the security guards with the Sharkey County Sheriff Department at football and basketball games at the local public and private high schools.

He has the opportunity to serve as an assistant tour guide at the two most popular events that are held each year: the Great Delta Festival held in May and the Bear Festival held in October. He enjoys helping the tour guide show students from local schools the different bear carvings and the stations that are set up to inform students about how the event originated and other important features.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in recognizing a dynamic servant of the community, Mr. Calvin Dickerson for his dedication to service throughout his community.

**KHAN ACADEMY PROJECT**

**HON. CHAKA FATTAH**

OF PENNSYLVANIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, January 17, 2012*

Mr. FATTAH. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to draw the attention of the House to the recent innovative vision developed by the Khan Academy, a non-profit educational organization. The organization's mission aims to decrease the disparity of educational resources, by using the internet as a tool to revolutionize the way we approach knowledge. In their attempt to mobilize a free, world-class education, they have compiled over 2,700 videos in the subjects of math, biology, chemistry, physics, history and art. The production of these videos is helping adults and children fill in gaps of knowledge they either forgot or never learned. I know that the Khan Academy recognizes the importance of technology in education and I commend them for their effort to develop creative strategies to help our children learn.

Salman Khan is the founder and visionary of the Khan Academy project. After graduating from Massachusetts Institution of Technology,

he pursued a career in finance and quit his job in 2009. While he assisted his cousin with the subject of mathematics, he designed tutorial videos and eventually published them online. He received a successful response from over 20,000 users, which ultimately led to his interest in crafting a media tool that would help revamp traditional classroom techniques. Currently, the Khan Academy receives about \$2 million in support and continues to expand videos and programs. Most recently, the organization decided to make the material available in community colleges and charter schools in the United States.

By recognizing the importance of technology in education, we have a responsibility to make sure that more people have access to the internet. If we fail to pave the road for this access to pioneering technologies, we run the risk of furthering economic disparities and barriers to equal education. I encourage my colleagues to become familiar with the Khan Academy's website and use the fresh approaches in technology to elevate their knowledge about the world.

**RECOGNIZING GEORGE THIEL**

**HON. PETER J. VISCLOSKY**

OF INDIANA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, January 17, 2012*

Mr. VISCLOSKY. Mr. Speaker, it is with great pleasure that I take this opportunity to recognize one of Northwest Indiana's most dedicated and selfless citizens, Mr. George Thiel, of Griffith, Indiana. After serving the people of Griffith as a firefighter for sixty years, the last twenty-nine of which he served as the department's Fire Chief, George retired from service at the beginning of 2012. In recognition of Mr. Thiel's service to his community, not only as a firefighter but also for his commitment to serving his community in many other capacities, a party was held in his honor on Sunday, January 8, 2012.

George was born March 20, 1926, in Saint John, Indiana, and learned the meaning of dedication and hard work on his family's farm. To this day, George still enjoys farming. After graduating from Dyer Central High School, George entered the Army, where he was quickly promoted to Sergeant for the 99th Infantry Division. During his military service, he participated in the Battle of the Bulge and earned a Purple Heart Medal. George was honorably discharged from the Army in 1945 and began his first career as a home builder, retiring from that position in 1990. Shortly after beginning his first career, George found his true love and married Peggy Vestal in 1951. He then found his other true love and joined the Griffith Fire Department in 1952. George and Peggy were blessed to have three children: Mike, Larry, and Sandy, who have given them six wonderful grandchildren. George remained dedicated to his family and his career and was promoted to Fire Chief in 1983, a post he retained until his retirement.

Of all the awards and highlights of a sixty-year firefighting career, George can be most proud of the public educational work he has accomplished and the countless lives he has saved. George has saved many lives simply through his initiative to provide Griffith residents with smoke detectors, carbon monoxide

detectors, and fire extinguishers at no cost to the resident. Additionally, George has passed on much of his knowledge and expertise to so many firefighters that Griffith will benefit for generations to come.

Aside from his incredible sixty years of service on the fire department, George's contributions to the Northwest Indiana community extend to numerous youth organizations that were fortunate to have George's coaching and mentoring skills. George continues to enjoy volunteering and watching all Griffith High School football and basketball games. George also remains an instrumental teacher to the people of Griffith by sharing his knowledge of the rich tradition and history of the town.

Mr. Speaker, I ask that you and my other distinguished colleagues join me in commending Mr. George Thiel for his lifetime of leadership, service, and dedication to the residents of Griffith, Indiana. He has touched the lives of countless citizens, and his commitment to the safety of his community and to the improvement of the quality of life for the people of Griffith is to be admired.

**RECOGNIZING MS. LELA BUIE FOR HER PERSISTENCE DESPITE DISABILITY AND DEDICATION TO SERVE OTHERS**

**HON. BENNIE G. THOMPSON**

OF MISSISSIPPI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, January 17, 2012*

Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor a remarkable person with disability, Ms. Lela Buie. Born on June 26, 1938, in Jefferson County, Fayette, Mississippi, she is the youngest of four children to the late Eda and Jude Sims. Her early years of education began at Ledall Elementary School and she later attended Alcorn in Lorman, Mississippi, and received her General Education Diploma.

Ms. Buie was employed at the Mississippi Department of Labor for 17 years before retiring to take care of her children.

Ms. Buie has two daughters, Sarah and Shirley Buie, and four sons, G.C. Buie, Jr., Edward Charles, Jude, and Robert Ander.

Ms. Buie is happy to have seen her loving children grow up to be successful and has a host of nieces and nephews that love and care for her. Ms. Buie is a longtime member of Rosehill Church #2.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in recognizing Ms. Lela Buie for her dedication to serving others in her disability.

**RECOGNIZING THE SELECTION OF MR. TRACY HOWARD FOR THE ARMY ALL-AMERICAN GAME**

**HON. ALCEE L. HASTINGS**

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, January 17, 2012*

Mr. HASTINGS of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to commend the accomplishments of Mr. Tracy Howard, Jr. of Miramar, Florida. Mr. Howard was selected to play in the 2012 Army All-American game on January 7, 2012. I would like to take this opportunity to congratulate him on this great honor, and to recognize all of his extraordinary achievements.

Mr. Howard is a star cornerback for the Miramar High School Patriots. Thanks in part to his proficient coverage skills, the Patriots finished runner up in the Florida High School Athletic Association's Class 8A Football Finals. While the team is full of talented players, college football coaches across the country rate Mr. Howard as one of the best prospects in the country.

As an indication of his talents, Mr. Howard has received numerous honors and awards. He was recently named a first-team Sports Illustrated.com All-American. In addition to playing in the Army All-American game, he was a finalist for both the U.S. Army All-American Player of the Year and Defensive Player of the Year Awards.

Mr. Speaker, Tracy Howard is an extremely talented athlete. His success is just one example of how talent, hard work, and dedication can help people achieve their dreams. I am honored to commend Mr. Howard on his accomplishments, and wish him the best of luck as he continues his football and academic career at the collegiate level.

IN CELEBRATION OF THE MICHAEL  
E. SMITH MIDDLE SCHOOL'S 50TH  
ANNIVERSARY

**HON. RICHARD E. NEAL**

OF MASSACHUSETTS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, January 17, 2012*

Mr. NEAL. Mr. Speaker, I would like to acknowledge the 50th anniversary of the building of the Michael E. Smith Middle School in South Hadley, Massachusetts. The school was built in 1961 and was dedicated on January 14, 1962.

The school is celebrating this milestone with an assembly on the morning of January 18, 2012. The assembly will feature several important faculty members who will be speaking, including Principal Erica Faginski-Stark and Walter Morse, a teacher who has worked at the school for 40 years. In addition, Superintendent Sayer, Former Principal Noel, and State Representative John Scibak will all be speaking at this historic event.

The Michael E. Smith Middle School is a public school in the South Hadley school district of Massachusetts. The school has gone by several names, beginning with the South Hadley Intermediate School upon the building's completion in 1962. In 1978, the school's name was changed to the South Hadley Middle School. With this name change came two new grade levels. The fifth and sixth grades were added to the seventh and eighth grades to double the school's classes. In 2002, the school changed its name for the final time, commemorating the late Michael E. Smith, a past superintendent.

For the last decade, the school has undergone several renovations, including the completion of a new building and an extensive remodeling of the interior. Currently, 700 students in the South Hadley School District are educated at the Michael E. Smith Middle School, with a faculty and staff of 104. Ms. Erica Faginski-Stark is the current Principal of the school, and the Assistant Principals are Mr. Vincent Napoli and Ms. Brett Costello.

I wish to congratulate the Michael E. Smith Middle School on providing 50 years of quality

education. I wish them good luck in educating the children of South Hadley for years to come.

HONORING THE MAYOR OF THE  
CITY OF GARY, KAREN FREEMAN-  
WILSON

**HON. PETER J. VISCLOSKY**

OF INDIANA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, January 17, 2012*

Mr. VISCLOSKY. Mr. Speaker, it is with great pride and the deepest respect that I rise today to honor one of Northwest Indiana's most distinguished citizens, the Mayor of the City of Gary, Indiana, Karen Freeman-Wilson. Born and raised in Gary, Karen is truly one of the most passionate and involved individuals that I have ever known, especially when it comes to serving the people of Gary. Mayor Freeman-Wilson's first term began this year, and in doing so, she took her place in history as the first female mayor of the City.

Karen Freeman was born in Gary, Indiana; her father, a steelworker, and her mother, the coordinator of a local community center. Both took great pride in their city and were heavily involved in their community, and it was through their example that Karen learned the importance of hard work and public service from a young age. Karen credits her parents with teaching her that "to whom much is given, much shall be required," and it is with this ideal in mind that she has accomplished so much throughout her distinguished career.

Following her graduation from Harvard Law School, Karen quickly realized that working in a law firm was not what she was meant to do. Rather, her calling was public service. Throughout her esteemed career, Mayor Freeman-Wilson has held many posts. From 1995 to 2000, she served as a presiding judge for the Gary City Court, during which time she established the first drug treatment court in the State of Indiana. In 2000, Governor Frank O'Bannon appointed Karen to serve as Attorney General for the State of Indiana. After leaving office, Karen continued to work for the public in various capacities. She has served as the Chief Executive Officer of the National Association of Drug Court Professionals, the Executive Director of the National Drug Court Institute, the Director of the Indiana Civil Rights Commission, and as a member of the board of directors for Hythiam, Inc. Mayor Freeman-Wilson has also been involved with numerous other organizations and charitable groups, including: the American Bar Association, the Indiana State Bar Association, Legal Services of Northwest Indiana, the Gary Chamber of Commerce, and the Second Chance Foundation, an organization aimed at combating substance abuse, for which she is a founding member. She is also very active in her church, Israel C.M.E. Church.

For her many contributions to her community, the State of Indiana, and beyond, the Mayor has received countless accolades. To name a few, she was recognized by Ebony magazine as a Leader of the Future, by the Delta Sigma Theta Sorority with the National Award for Achievement in Civil Rights, and is an inductee into the Stanley Goldstein Drug Court Hall of Fame. In addition, she is a recipient of the prestigious Sagamore of the Wa-

bash, awarded by former Indiana Governors Evan Bayh and Frank O'Bannon.

A devoted wife and mother, Karen's passion for serving the people of Gary is matched only by her love for her family. Karen and her husband, Carmen, are the proud parents of a daughter, Jordan. Karen and Carmen have reinforced the same sense of responsibility and civic pride in their daughter that Karen learned from her parents.

Mr. Speaker, I ask that you and all of my distinguished colleagues join me in congratulating Mayor Karen Freeman-Wilson as she begins her first term as the Mayor of Gary. She is to be commended for her leadership, dedication, and her love for the people of Gary. Karen serves as a true inspiration to those she serves, and I look forward working with her in the years to come.

RECOGNIZING REVEREND LARRY  
WILLIAMS FOR HIS HONORABLE  
SERVICE TO OUR COUNTRY

**HON. BENNIE G. THOMPSON**

OF MISSISSIPPI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, January 17, 2012*

Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor a remarkable veteran, Reverend Larry Williams. Reverend Williams has shown what can be done through hard work, dedication and a desire to make a positive difference in doing God's will.

Reverend Williams, a resident of Mayersville, Mississippi, was born May 25, 1953, to Paul and Gracie Williams in Clarksdale, Mississippi. He enlisted in the United States Army December 7, 1972, and served until January 1993.

Reverend Williams completed his graduation through the Army Program while in Germany. Later, he attended the University of Maryland and earned his Associates Degree from Central Texas College.

He is married to Terry Williams. Together, they have one son, Dominique Williams. Reverend Williams was installed as Pastor at Saint Peter Missionary Baptist Church in December 2006. It is his passion to minister to those who are lost.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in recognizing Reverend Larry Williams for his dedication and service to our great country.

OUR UNCONSCIONABLE NATIONAL  
DEBT

**HON. MIKE COFFMAN**

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Tuesday, January 17, 2012*

Mr. COFFMAN of Colorado. Mr. Speaker, on January 26, 1995, when the last attempt at a balanced budget amendment passed the House by a bipartisan vote of 300-132, the national debt was \$4,801,405,175,294.28.

Today, it is \$15,236,323,396,400.44. We've added \$10,434,918,221,106.16 dollars to our debt in 16 years. This is \$10 trillion in debt our Nation, our economy, and our children could have avoided with a balanced budget amendment.